

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KINSHA 00951 01 OF 02 042158Z

62

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FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6312

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 KINSHASA 0951

NODIS

SUBJ: ANGOLA: LOOKING AHEAD

1. SALIENT CONSIDERATIONS FOR GOZ AT PRESENT TIME ARE: A) WITHDRAWAL OF SOUTH AFRICA FROM ANGOLA AND TERMINATION OF US COVERT AID TO FNLA AND UNITA; B) INABILITY OF ZAIRE OR ANY OTHER GOVERNMENT TO EXTEND ENOUGH AID TO COUNTER CURRENT LEVELS OF SOVIET/CUBAN ASSISTANCE; C) LIKELIHOOD THAT, AS A CONSEQUENCE, FNLA AND UNITA WILL CONTINUE TO LOSE GROUND AND MAY BE REDUCED TO GUERRILLA STATUS IN VERY NEAR FUTURE; D) PROSPECT OF MPLA-CONTROLLED ANGOLA HAVING NEGATIVE IMPACT ON ZAIRE'S SECURITY, BOTH FROM STANDPOINT OF EXTERNAL MILITARY THREAT AND INCREASED INTERNAL INSTABILITY; E) NEED FOR GOZ TO DEAL WITH EMERGING SECURITY THREAT, EITHER BY BUILDING UP DEFENSE CAPABILITY OR DIMINISHING THREAT THROUGH POLITICAL ACCOMMODATION, OR BOTH. HOW ZAIRE ADJUSTS TO THIS CHANGING SITUATION, AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH US INTERESTS IN ZAIRE ARE AFFECTED BY IT, WILL DEPEND IN LARGE MEASURE ON OUR ABILITY TO CONTINUE SUPPORTING ZAIRE DURING THE CRITICAL DAYS AHEAD.

2. IT SEEMS EVIDENT THAT MOBUTU STARTED SOME TIME AGO TO PLAN FOR THE CONTINGENCY OF AN MPLA VICTORY IN ANGOLA. WHILE CONTINUING TO WORK IN THE DIPLOMATIC FIELD TO RETAIN AFRICAN POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR FNLA AND UNITA, AS THE ANGOLA SITUATION HAS DETERIORATED HIS EFFORTS HAVE BEEN INCREASINGLY DIRECTED TOWARD DRUMMING UP INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR ZAIRE'S OWN SECURITY IN THE FACE OF THE GREAT POWER (I.E., SOVIET) THREAT. THIS IS THE THRUST OF THE COMMUNIQUE FOLLOWING LAST WEEK'S MEETING BETWEEN MOBUTU, TOLBERT AND BOKOSSA; THE APPEAL TO THE UN SECURITY

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PAGE 02 KINSHA 00951 01 OF 02 042158Z

COUNCIL AFTER THE DILOLO ATTACK; AND THE NGUZG MISSION TO WASHING-

TON AND ZAIRE'S EFFORT TO INDUCE OTHER AFRICAN STATES TO JOIN THAT MISSION. THE FACT THAT, IN ALL OF THIS, RELATIVELY FEW CHARGES ARE BEING LEVELED AT THE MPLA PER SE PROBABLY REFLECTS MOBUTU'S EFFORTS TO DISASSOCIATE ANGOLAN FROM FOREIGN ELEMENTS AND THEREBY KEEP OPEN HIS OPTIONS WITH RESPECT TO AN EVENTUAL ACCOMMODATION WITH THE MPLA.

3. THE PROSPECT OF MPLA CONTROL IN ANGOLAPOSES A NUMBER OF PROBLEMS FOR ZAIRE. THEY EXTEND WELL BEYOND THE OBVIOUS THREATS OF A HOSTILE REGIME ALONG ZAIRE'S LONG BORDER, CLOSE TO ZAIRE'S VITAL INDUSTRIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE, STRADDLING ZAIRE'S NARROW ACCESS TO THE SEA, AND CONTROLLING ZAIRE'S VITAL LIFELINE ALONG THE BENGUELA RAILROAD. THEY ALSO ENTAIL POTENTIAL INTERNAL TROUBLES AS WELL. THE MORE THAN 4,000 KATANGAN GENDARMES IN ANGOLA, WELL ARMED AND OPERATING FROM FRIENDLY TERRITORY, COULSE POSE SERIOUS SECURITY PROBLEMS IN THE SHABA REGION FROM WHICH THEY WERE DRIVED YEARS AGO AND WHERE THEY STILL ENJOY CONSIDERABLY SYMPATHY AND SUPPORT AMONG THE POPULACE. THE GOZ'S CONCERN ABOUT THE GENDARMES IS REFLECTED BY THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH THEY ARE BROUGHT UP IN OUR TALKS WITH TOP GOZ OFFICIALS. DISSIDENT ELEMENTS IN THE KIVU, INCLUDING THE PRP WHICH KIDNAPPED THE US STUDENTS LAST SPRING, COULD ALSO BE ENCOURAGE TO BECOME MORE ACTIVE (WE CONTINUE TO RECEIVE REPORTS OF PRP PLOTTING OF ANOTHER KIDNAP ATTEMPT). MEANWHILE, RECENT SUBVERSIVE STATEMENTS BY ANTOINE GIZENGA, LONG-EXILED OPPONENT OF MOBUTU, HAVE ELICITED PUBLIC CONDEMNATION BY THE GOZ. THE VEHEMENCE WITH WHICH MOBUTU HIMSELF HAS REBUTTED GIZENGA'S CHARGES, AND THE FACT THAT GOZ REACTION HAS EXTENDED TO THE POINT OF ORGANIZING PRO-MOBUTU, ANTI-GIZENGA DEMONSTRATIONS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE (AND THEREBY SERVING TO DRAW ATTENTION TO AN OPPOSITIONIST WHO HAS BEEN LARGELY FORGOTTEN IN ZAIRE) SEEM TO REFLECT THE EXTENT OF THE GOZ'S CURRENT ANXIETY ABOUT INTERNAL SECURITY.

4.A POTENTIAL THREAT TO MOBUTU'S REGIME WHICH IS EVEN MORE SERIOUS -- AND ABOUT WHICH WE DO NOT YET KNOW VERY MUCH -- IS THE IMPACT ON ZAIRE'S ARMED FORCES OF A "DEFEAT" IN ANGOLA. WE DO KNOW THAT FAZ HAS NOT SHOWN UP VERY WELL IN THE COMBAT; THAT THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE ENTHUSIASM AMONG THE TROOPS FOR SERVICE IN ANGOLA; THAT THERE HAVE BEEN NUMEROUS INCIDENTS OF INDISCIPLINE AND DESERTIONS AMONG FAZ UNITS IN ANGOLA. PERHAPS IN RECOGNITION

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 KINSHA 00951 01 OF 02 042158Z

OF THESE REALITIES, MOBUTU HAS NEVER TRIED TO PLAY UP FAZ PARTICIPATION IN THE WAR OR, FOR THAT MATTER, COMMITTED VERY MANY OF HIS FORCES TO THE ANGOLAN FRONT. THE NEGATIVE EFFECT OF THE WAR ON FAZ MORALE, PLUS CONTINUING DISCONTENT AMONG SOLDIERS AND THEIR FAMILIES WITH LIVING CONDITIONS AND LOW OR ERRATIC PAY, COULD AT SOME POINT DEVELOP INTO MORE OUTSPOKEN DEFIANCE OF THE REGINE. IT IS NOT CERTAIN, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT MOBUTU COULD COUNT ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OR THE COMPLETE LOYALTY

OF HIS ARMED FORCES SHOULD HE HAVE TO DEAL FORCEFULLY AND PERHAPS
SIMULTANEOUSLY, WITH DISSIDENCE IN KIVU, SHABA, AND ELSEWHERE.
THE SAME UNCERTAINTY MIGHT ALSO APPLY TO ANY DIRECT CONFRONTATIONS
WITH THE MPLA ALONG ZAIRE'S BORDERS OR SHOULD MOBUTU AGAIN
ATTEMPT TO DISLODGE THE MPLA FROM HEAVILY-DEFENDED CABINDA.

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PAGE 01 KINSHA 00951 02 OF 02 042208Z

62

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6313

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 KINSHASA 0951

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5. STILL ANOTHER SECURITY PROBLEM IS HOW TO DEAL WITH FNLA
CADRES AND THE MOVEMENT'S BAKONGO SUPPORTERS IN THE EVENT THE FNLA
IS FORCED OUT OF ANGOLA ALTOGETHER OR IF, AS PART OF SOME
ARRANGEMENT WITH THE MPLA, MOBUTU CEASES HIS SUPPORT AND
PROCEEDS TO NEUTRALIZE FNLA'S MILITARY CAPABILITY. WHILE THE FNLA
MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO DO MUCH ABOUT THIS, THE FEELING OF BEING
ABANDONED BY THE GOZ AMONG FNLA ADHERENTS, LARGE NUMBERS OF
ANGOLAN REFUGEES RETURNED TO ZAIRE, AND BAKONGO SYMPATHIZERS COULD
WELL CRYSTALIZE INTO ACTIVE OPPOSITION TO THE REGIME.

6. FINALLY, UNDERLYING ALL OF THESE POTENTIAL SECURITY PROBLEMS
IN ZAIRE'S CRITICAL FINANCIAL/ECONOMIC SITUATION, WHICH AS IT
PERSISTS CUTS DEEPER INTO THE WELFARE OF THE RANK AND FILE
AND ERODES CONFIDENCE IN MOBUTU'S LEADERSHIP. ALL SIGNS POINT TO EVEN
GREATER BELT-TIGHTENING IN THE YEAR AHEAD AS A RESULT OF DRASTIC
REFORMS PLANNED BY THE IMF.

7. MOBUTU'S STRATEGY TO COPE WITH THESE PROBLEMS ENTAILS A
SHIFT OF HIS PRIORITIES AND RESOURCES AWAY FROM ANGOLA BACK TO
ZAIRE; A FOCUSING OF ATTENTION (AND BLAME) ON OUTSIDE POWERS
(I.E., THE USSR); AND AN EFFORT TO STRENGTHEN ZAIRE'S CAPACITY

TO COPE WITH ALL THREATS TO ITS SECURITY, BE THEY EXTERNAL OR INTERNAL. IN PURSUING THIS STRATEGY MOBUTU IS EXPLORING ALL POSSIBLE SOURCES OF SUPPORT: E.G., THE FRENCH, WHO ARE QUIETLY HELPING IN THE MILITARY FIELD; THE BELGIANS, WHO ARE NOW NEGOTIATING FOR RECIPROCAL FINANCIAL BENEFITS; THE CHINESE WHO WHILE REFUSING TO CONTINUE HELPING FNLA AND UNITA HAVE AGREED TO SUPPLY ZAIRE WITH MORE ARMS.

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PAGE 02 KINSHA 00951 02 OF 02 042208Z

8. BUT THE KEY TO ZAIRE'S STRATEGY IS SUPPORT FROM THE US. REALIZING OUR COVERT AID MUST END, MOBUTU PROBABLY STILL HAS SOME HOPE THAT CONGRESS MIGHT BE INDUCED TO FUND OVERT MILITARY ASSISTANCE, IF NOT TO THE MOVEMENTS IN ANGOLA, AT LEAST TO THOSE NEIGHBORING AFRICAN STATES WHOSE SECURITY IS INCREASINGLY THREATENED. IN CASE SUCH ASSISTANCE PROVES IMPOSSIBLE IN VIEW OF CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES, MOBUTU SEEKS FROM US AS A FALL-BACK SOME FORM OF SECURITY ASSURANCE OR GUARANTY. WE DOUBT MOBUTU HAS ANY ILLUSIONS REGARDING OUR ABILITY TO PROVIDE SUCH A GUARANTY; IT IS MORE LIKELY PUT FORTH AS A EFFORT TO DRAMATIZE HIS CASE AND ELICIT A GREATER RESPONSE FROM US IN TERMS OF ACTUAL HARDWARE. IN THE EVENT THIS APPEAL TO US ACHIEVES NO POSITIVE RESULTS, MOBUTU WILL AT LEAST BE IN A BETTER POSITION TO BLAME US FOR HIS PROBLEMS, IF THAT SHOULD EVENTUALLY SUIT HIS PURPOSES, AND TO JUSTIFY OPENING UP OTHER OPTIONS, SUCH AS THE CHINESE AND PERHAPS AT SOME POINT THE SOVIETS AS WELL.

9. THE OPTIMUM RESOLUTION OF ALL THESE PROBLEMS FROM THE STANDPOINT OF BOTH ZAIRE'S AND OUR OWN INTERESTS WOULD BE PREVENTION OF AN MPLA MILITARY TAKE-OVER IN ANGOLA. IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES THIS WOULD REQUIRE A SEIZEABLE AND RAPIDLY-IMPLEMENTED OVERT MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR FNLA AND UNITA. IF SUCCESSFUL, SUCH A PROGRAM WOULD NOT ONLY ACHIEVE OUR OBJECTIVES IN ANGOLA BUT WOULD ALSO SERVE OUR INTERESTS IN ZAIRE BY REDUCING OR ELIMINATING MANY OF THE SECURITY CONCERNS OUTLINED ABOVE. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO ASSESS FROM HERE THE CHANCES FOR AN EFFORT SUCH AS THIS BEING MADE.

10. ANOTHER OPTION WOULD BE CONTINUED GUERRILLA OPERATIONS BY FNLA AND UNITA, USING ZAIRE AND ZAMBIA AS PRINCIPAL SUPPORT BASES. SUCH OPERATIONS MIGHT PREVENT MPLA FROM CONSOLIDATING ITS CONTROL AND, AT A MINIMUM, COULD CONSTITUTE LEVERAGE FOR BOTH THE MOVEMENTS AND THEIR SUPPORTING STATES IN ANY EVENTUAL BARGAINING WITH MPLA. GUERRILLA OPERATIONS WOULD OF COURSE REQUIRE OUTSIDE FINANCING AND, AGAIN, WE ARE UNCERTAIN THAT CONGRESSIONAL RESTRAINTS WOULD PERMIT US PARTICIPATION. IF NOT, IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT FINANCING FOR THE OPERATIONS MIGHT BE OBTAINED FROM OTHER SOURCES, SUCH AS FRANCE, BETTER-OFF AFRICAN STATES LIKE GABON AND IVORY COAST, AND CERTAIN MIDDLE EAST PETROLEUM STATES. THIS WOULD PERMIT THE US TO CONCENTRATE ON

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 KINSHA 00951 02 OF 02 042208Z

EXTENDING OVERT FINANCIAL, ECONOMIC AND SECURITY ASSISTANCE TO ZAIRE, ZAMBIA AND OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES AFFECTED BY ANGOLA. THE POINT COULD BE MADE TO THE CONGRESS THAT THE US, HAVING FAILED TO FOLLOW THROUGH IN ITS ACTIONS IN ANGOLA, HAS AN INTEREST IF NOT RESPONSIBILITY TO ASSIST THOSE NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES WHOSE SECURITY HAS THEREBY BEEN PLACED IN JEOPARDY.

11. THE FORMS OF OUR OVERT ASSISTANCE COULD INCLUDE:

A) PROMPT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ENTIRE \$60 MILLION BALANCE OF PAYMENTS RELIEF PACKAGE (PL 480 AND CCC, EXIM CREDITS, AID PROGRAM LOAN), AND CONSIDERATION OF INCREASED ASSISTANCE IN ALL OF THESE CATEGORIES.

B) INCREASED LEVELS OF FMS CREDITS TO HELP ACCELERATE THE STRENGTHENING OF ZAIRE DEFENSES.

C) HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO ANGOLAN REFUGEES WHO ARE ALREADY COMING BACK ACROSS THE BORDERS IN INCREASING NUMBERS.

D) RAISING AID DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE LEVELS FOR NEXT FISCAL YEAR AND BEYOND.

12. THE EXTENT TO WHICH WE PURSUE THE ABOVE OPTIONS WILL OF COURSE DEPEND IN GOOD MEASURE ON WHAT WE CAN OR CANNOT DO IN ANGOLA ITSELF. IF IT TURNS OUT WE CANNOT DO MUCH MORE, THEN OUR ASSISTANCE TO ZAIRE WILL BE ALL THE MORE IMPORTANT FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF OUR RELATIONS AND INTERESTS HERE. I THEREFORE URGE THAT, AS A CONTINGENCY MEASURE, WE START EXPLORING THESE AND OTHER ASSISTANCE OPTIONS NOW.

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